

Family history linked to increased Alzheimer's risk

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Researchers in Utah have found that people who have relatives who died of Alzheimer's are more likely to develop the disease. The findings are published today (Wednesday 13 March) in the scientific journal, *Neurology*.

Dr. Sara Imarisio, Head of Research from Alzheimer's Research UK said:

"While in some rare instances – less than 1 percent of all people who develop Alzheimer's – the disease is caused by an inherited genetic mutation, this is not the case for the vast majority of cases.

"Developing Alzheimer's disease is usually due to a complex mix of age, and other [modifiable risk factors](#). If a close family member has Alzheimer's it does not mean you will also develop the disease.

"This research looks at a group of people with rich information about their [family history](#) and as scientists have identified around 30 genes that are linked to Alzheimer's risk, it is no surprise that this study identified an association between an individual's risk of the disease and having relatives who died from Alzheimer's.

"Our genetics don't tell the whole story when it comes to dementia risk. Research suggests that up to a third of cases could be prevented if it we eliminated risk factors that are linked to lifestyle. The best current evidence suggests that not smoking, drinking within recommended guidelines, staying physically and mentally active, eating a healthy balanced diet, keeping cholesterol and [blood pressure](#) in check are all good ways to support a healthy brain as we age."

Provided by Alzheimer's Research UK

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